HAPPINESS IS 4-H

By Frank H. Sweet
Extension Agent

The rescheduled 4-H Public Speaking Contest will be held tonight (Thursday) beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Appomattox Elementary School. Ribbons and trophies will be awarded during the program. Make your plans to be with us and hear some excellent young speakers. Public Speaking awards are provided by Farmers National Bank.

* * *

There is a brand new 4-H Dairy Calf project that is an excellent guide for selecting and caring for a young dairy calf. 4-H members with dairy projects may be interested in obtaining a copy of this new material.

* * *

March will be the month for 4-H members to sign up for wildlife feed patch seed. The wildlife feed patch seed is provided by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and is packaged to plant a 1/10 of an acrea area. Parents must give their approval for 4-H members to receive the wildlife seed.

The wildlife seed mixture provides food and cover for songbirds, game birds and small animals during the winter months. It is a great way to help increase wildlife populations.

* * *

Leadership is an important part of a 4-H member's career. Our senior 4-H members should be constantly alert for opportunities to improve their leadership abilities. One way is to volunteer your services to help with county programs. Joanie Canada, a member of the Evergreen Club, has recently asked to help take pictures at 4-H programs during the year. This will help build Joanie's leaderhip and will help provide some good candid shots of 4-H members in action.

* * *

4-H Demonstration and Illustrated Talk Time is slowly sneaking up on us. Senior District Contest will be Saturday, April 7, at Appomattox County High School. Older 4-H'ers should be making their plans to participate.

Musical Program Mount Shiloh

All officers, members and friends are asked to attend the regular evening worship service this Sunday evening at the Mount Shiloh Baptist Church at 7 p.m. The entire program will rendered by Mr. James Carr and the Southern Jubilees of Nathalie, Virginia.

Officers and members are asked to attend the regular church meeting this Saturday at 12 o'clock. Business of importance will be presented.

The Galilee Usher board has completed plans for its anniversary program on the first Sunday in March at 3 p.m. According to the president, Mrs. Bessie Watson the program will be of interest to all members and friends. Special greetings will be given by local usher boards.

Regular preaching service will be held this Sunday morning at the Promise Land Baptist Church. The public is cordially invited to attend.

A very large delegation of relatives and friends from Appomattox attended the funeral service of the late Mrs. Emma Z. Pannell last Friday February 16 at 2 p.m. at the Green Spring Baptist Church, Brookneal, Virginia. The former pastor, Rev. James McLaughlin officated and delivered the eulogy. He was assisted in the service by the Reverends Harvey, Jones and Lawing. The senior choir rendered beautiful music. The floral designs were in large numbers. Burial was held in the family plot in the church cemetery. The Jeffress Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

The general public is cordially invited to attend the anniversary celebration of the Men's Community Club of the Zion Baptist Church. The Rev. James Franklin will serve as Master of Ceremony.

Southern States Cooperative's Sales Shows Increase

Southern States Cooperative's Sales volume for the first six months of the 1978-79 fiscal year showed a 60,600,000 increase as compared with the same period last year. Of this increase, $36,800,000 was in the Grain Marketing Division, which was not included in the previous year's total.

This was reported by Mr. R. A. Allgood of the cooperative to the regional board conference of local agricultural leaders and young farmers held at Farmville.

A total of 19 of these meetings are being held this month by the cooperative across the states of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia and Kentucky.

Mr. Allgood told the session that the cooperative's volume reached $209,600,000 for the first half of the year as compared to $149,000,000 a year ago. Net savings after income taxes and equity income totaled $1,471,000, down $478,000 or 24.5% from last year. This decline was mainly due to substantial decreases in supplier patronage refunds. Other factors contributing to the decline were continued low margins and increased operating and interest costs.

Total feed tonnage of 270,000 for the period was down 6% from last year's volume for the first half of the fiscal year; fertilizer volume was 199,000 tons, down 12,000 tons from a year ago; seed volume was $4,584,000, up slightly; farm supply volume was $30,800,000, up 11.4% over last year, while petroleum volume was 133,703,000 gallons, up 26% from a year ago.

Grain marketing volume was 11,300,000 bushels, an increase of 8% but higher prices brought about a 34% increase in dollar volume.

Also appearing on the program was Mr. Jack McHugh who, in commenting on the farm economy, pointed out that although farm income is up 25% over last year's depressed levels, it could improve even further if the export market remains strong. This market could go even higher once trade arrangements are set with the Peoples Republic of China. He pointed out that the production of about one out of every three acres moves to the export market. This represents 25% of farmers' gross income.

In two other areas of concern to farmers - - foreign investments in agriculture in this country and the energy problem - - he pointed out that surveys indicate that the number of acres controlled by foreign interests in this country should not rise above the predicted 1/2 of 1%. In the case of energy, it was emphasized that it was the aim of all connected with agribusiness to see that agriculture has a high enough priority on energy not only for the production of food, but so that fertilizer plants will be able to operate and supply needed plant food.

Also participating in the session were Eldridge W. Sanderson, a member of the cooperative's board of directors, and Hugh Hanis, the organization's regional manager.

Attending the session were Dan G. Coleman, co-manager of Coleman and Sons, Edwin Anderson, John P. Alvis, Calvin Harris, E. N. Harvey and B. J. Lucado.

$1,000 Reward

A $1,000 reward is being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of person or persons who on the night of August 3, 1978 murdered Alfred Harwood Coleman, Route 4, Appomattox.

Any information regarding this crime should be given to the Appomattox County Sheriff's Department, telephone 352-8241. Any information given will be kept strictly confidential. This notice has been released by J. E. Richardson, Sheriff, Appomattox County.

Tara Johnson Celebrates Birthday

Tara Johnson celebrated her 7th birthday on Saturday, February 3rd. She received many nice presents.

Tara is the daughter of Mrs. Yvonne Johnson of Appomattox and Ronald Johnson of Lynchburg.

Soil Erosion - Cancer of the Land - Leukemia of the Stream

Soil erosion is much like cancer - it "eats away" and saps the vitality from the topsoil and poisons the stream with venomous pesticides, fertilizers and mud. Fortunately, soil erosion and stream pollution can be cured. Research has proved that most local soils can lose up to 4 tons per acre per year and not deteriorate or cause excessive stream pollution. This is because soil, much like living ittuse, can rebuild itself from decaying rock material and organic matter. Nationally, there are estimates that 4 billion tons of soil is being washed into streams each year, with three-fourths of this soil coming from agricultural lands. Locally, some of our cropland is losing 10 to 20 tons per acre annually. Much of this loss can be prevented. There are several contributing factors to the increased erosion rates such as: 1. new technolgies and larger farm machinery; 2. a shift away from crop rotations using sod; 3. increased reliance on commercial fertilizers and less use of cover crops and crop residues; 4. land being leased on short-term leases where the landowner does nothing for the land and the operator cannot afford to make conversation improvements on the land.

The Red House - Hat Creek - Brookneal area has some of the world's finest tobacco land. Unfortunately, cultivated row crops, such as tobacco, create highly erosive conditions unless good soil conservation is practiced. Violent storms, such thunderstorms and hurricanes, can sweep tons of topsoil off a cultivated field and into the stream. The storm that hit the Red House - Hat Creek - Brookneal area this past July 3rd played havoc with cropland, especially tobacco land, dumping 5 inches of rain in 1 to 2 hours. "It's the worst storm I can remember," says Raymond Ward, Rt. 1, Brookneal. Even gently sloping land that would not normally be subject to severe erosion eroded badly. But Ward went on to say that we have bad storms every year or two and have to be prepared.

In summing up the benefits of conservation, Paul Gilliam of Red House noted that the Soil Conservation Service, (SCS), recently helped him establish a stripcropping system on part of his land. "The strips definitely helped reduce the damage," he said. "We're going to put strips on our other fields. Good tobacco land is too scarce to let it wash away," Gilliam said. Gilliam's neighbor, Herbert Reese, requested SCS assistance to construct some waterways and terraces so that he would be better prepared for the next storm. "Besides losing our soil, gullies are hard on farm machinery," Reese added.

"The only way to save top soil in tobacco fields is to install terrace," says Billy Elder near Hat Creek. Elder plans to terrace more of his cropland.

Ed Bates near Brookneal is going back to more terraces. "They don't work too good with my large equipment, but I can't stand to see my land wash away," he said.

Dr. Franklin Flint, Chairman of the Robert E. Lee Soil & Water Conservation District, noted that the Conservation District Board recognizes erosion problems peculiar to the tobacco section. "We are giving work in this section the top priority in the District," he said.

In noting the renewed interest in terraces, Robert Hankins, SCS technician says. "We can build terraces smaller now and have more leeway to get them parallel. Where the farmer has enough land, we can put in parallel strips and a rotation of tobacco followed by small grain or fescue. Terraces can be built with farm machinery and both terraces and strips are eligible for cost-share through the ASCS office."

G. C. Maxwell of Pamplin sums up soil erosion this way, "When a farmer works his land and lets it wash, it's like killing the goose that lays the golden egg."

Farmers are urged to cooperate with soil and water conservation districts and carry out a voluntary conservation program. The alternative seems to be mandatory conservation administered by the Environmental Protection Agency. Most agree that voluntary conservation will be palatable to the farm community and could do a good job of presenting "land cancer." A free physical examination can be made by SCS Conservationists. They will prescribe the conservation-treatment and assist with conservation operations needed. These, along with a steady diet of good management, should keep your land healthy and productive.

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Energy Credits

Recent legislation will allow many taxpayers to claim two new income tax credits intended to offset expenditures for installing energy-saving devices and renewable energy source property in the home. The following questions and answers from the IRS explain some of the features of these new credits:

Q - What is the difference between the two credits?

A - The two credits reflect the two categories of equipment that qualify - (1) energy conservaiton devices such as insulation or storm doors, and (2) solar, wind and geothermal energy equipment - and the costs to install these devices and systems.

Q - What is the credit for energy conservation devices?

A - Homeowners and renters can claim a tax credit for energy conservation devices installed between April 20, 1977 and December 31, 1985. Items eligible for the credit are limited to insulation, storm or thermal windows and doors, furnace replacement burners, weather stripping and caulking, flue-opening modifications, electrical or mechanical furnace ignition systems which replace gas pilot lights, clock thermostats and meters which display cost of energy usage.

Q - How much is the credit for energy conservation devices?

A - The credit is 15 percent of the first $2,000 in eligible expense, to a maximum of $300. The credit must amount to at least $10 in order to be claimed and it cannot exceed your tax liability.

Q - Do I have to spend the entire $2,000 in one year?

A - No. The credit is cumulative. It applies to expenditures made between April 20, 1977 and December 31, 1985. The total credits claimed for all years may not total more than $300.

Q - I paid $700 to have some insulation installed in my home, so that would give a credit of $105. If the maximum is $300, do I lose the rest?

A - Not if you install other energy saving devices. The credit is cumulative and you can add to it from year to year until you reach the maximum amount. If you put up storm windows and doors next year and it costs you another $700, you could claim another credit of $105. You would still have $90 of credit left and could continue to claim the credit until your total amounted to $300.

Q - Are there any other requirements?

A - Yes. You must actually install the device in your home to be eligible. Just purchasing the equipment and storing it in a basement, for example, is not enough. Also, the home must be your principal place of residence, vacation and summer homes do not qualify, and it must be in the U.S.

Q - I don't own my home. Can I claim the credit even though I rent?

A - Yes. Renters are eligible as well as tenant-stockholders in cooperatives. Also, members of condominium management associations may claim a share of the credit for their oganizations qualifying expenditures.

Q - I built my home last year and installed insulation, weather stripping and caulking. Will my home qualify?

A - Yes, but only if construction was substantially completed April 20, 1977 and the energy conserving items were installed after April 19, 1977.

Q - What happens if I move?

A - If your new principal residence meets the general requirements, the $2,000 expense limitation starts again, just as though you'd never made any previous expenditures.

Q - What does the other credit involve?

A - The other credit offsets the costs of installing renewable energy source property, such as solor, geothermal, or wind energy equipment, to heat or cool your home, or to heat water for your home.

A - Are the amounts the same as for the other credits?

A - No. For solar, geothermal or wind energy equipment, the credit is 30 percent of the first $2,000 in expenses, plus 20 percent of the next $8,000 spent, to a maximum credit of $2,200. For example, if you install a solar heating system which costs you $5,000 and you meet the other requirements, your credit would be 30 percent of the first $2,000, or $600, plus 20 percent of the remaining $3,000, or $600, for a total credit of $1,200.

Q - Is this credit cumulative too?

A - Yes. If your credit for this year totaled $1,200, for instance, you would be able to claim another $1,000 in credits in subsequent years.

Q - Are there any other requirements if I install solar energy equipment?

A - Yes the system must have been installed in your home between April 20, 1977 and December 31, 1985. You can either own or rent, but your home must be your principal place of residence and it must be located in the U.S. In addition, the credit cannot exceed your tax liability. The renewable energy source credit is available for items installed on either existing or newly constructed residences.

Q - Do I have to itemize deductions to take advantage of either of these credits?

A - No. Because your expenses are claimed as tax credits, not deductions, you do not have to itemize to take advantage of the provisions. But you do have to file the Form 1040. As with any other credit, the amount you claim is substracted directly from your tax liability.

Q - How do I claim the credit?

A - Compute the credit on Form 5695, "Energy Credits". The form is included in the Form 1040 packages sent to taxpayers in late December and is also available at many banks, post offices, from local IRS offices, or by calling IRS toll-free. Qualifying expenditures made in 1977 (after April 19) and qualifying expenditures made in 1978 must both be claimed on your 1978 Form 1040.

Partial Solor Eclipe To Occur Feb. 26

RICHMOND, Feb. 15 - A partial solor eclipse, caused when the moon moves between the earth and the sun, will occur in Virginia from 10:50 a.m. - 1:23 p.m. (EST), February 26, it was announced today by Dr. Paul H. Knappenberger, Jr., director of the Science Museum of Virginia.

About 60 percent of the sun will be obscured at the time of maximum eclipse (12:06 p.m. EST). At the beginning, a tiny sliver of the sun will be covered, and this will increase gradually until about three-fifth's of the sun's surface is obscured.

According to Dr. Knappenberger, "Virginia residents will be able to view the eclipse, weather permitting, but should use proper observing procedures. The safest viewing method," he noted, "is to project the image of the sun through the eyepiece of a telescope onto a screen, which could be made from a piece of white paper and held a few inches from the eyepiece; or to project the image through a pin-hole in a cardboard box."

Under no circumstances should the sun be viewed directly through a telescope or with the naked eye.

Several of these devices will be available for public viewing in front of the Museum (located at 2500 West Board Street) throughout the eclipse.

Jordan News

Preaching services will be held Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m.

On Sunday evening at 6:00 p.m. the Senior Choir will be celebrating their 28th anniversary. Plan now to attend.

Anyone interested in going to Georgia the weekend of May 17th is asked to get in contact with any member of the Gospel Harmonettes or call 352-8073 or 352-8951 for further information.

We wish Mrs. Viola Austin a speedy recovery. She is a patient in the Lynchburg General Hospital.

A HANDSOME SNOWMAN AND A BEAUTIFUL SNOWLADY, shown above, were made by, left to right, Lina Trent and Cindy Morris. With approximately ten inches of new snow dumped on Appomattox County Sunday and Monday morning this was an interesting way to spend your time.

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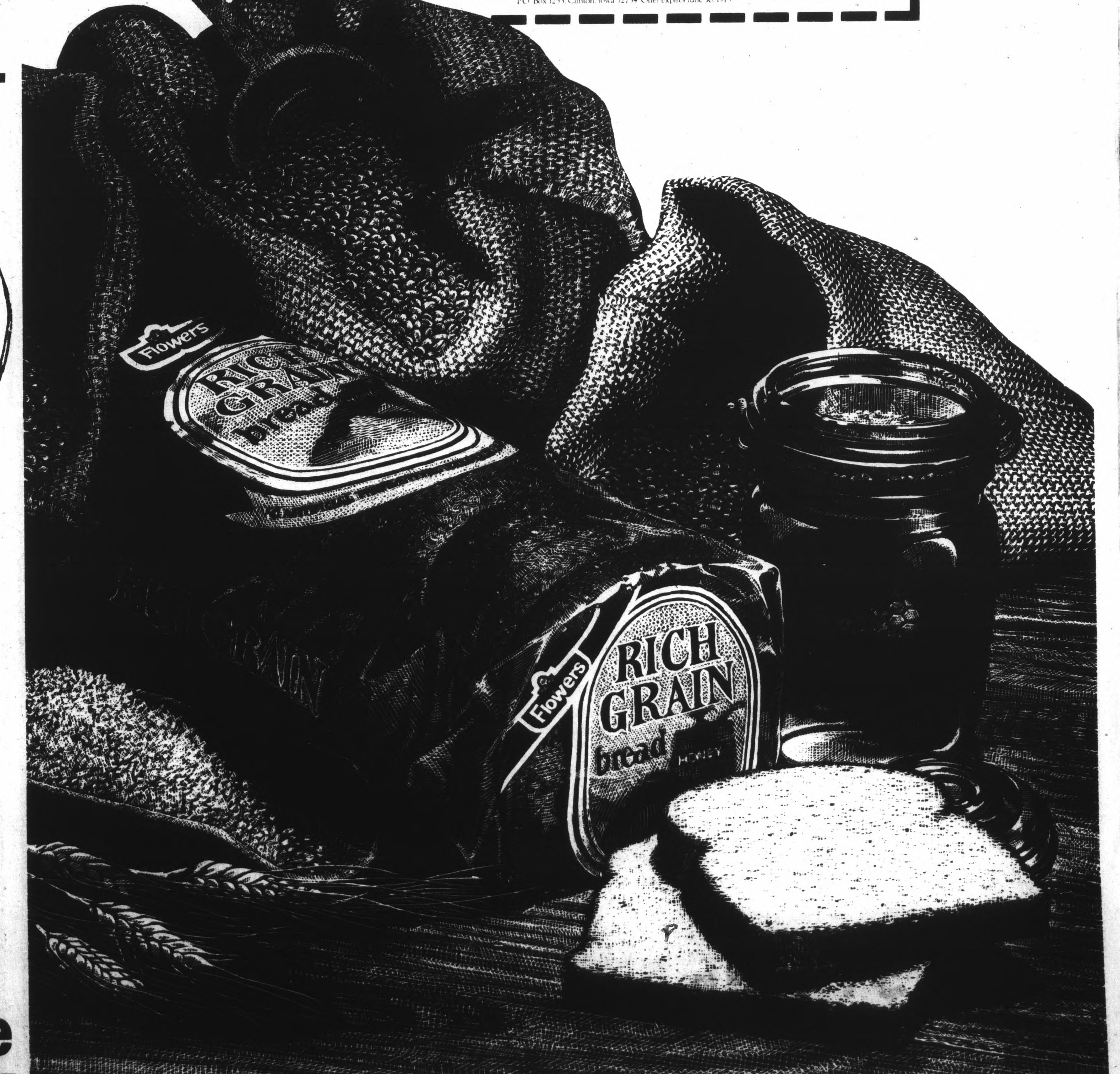

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